

The Idea-Details Strategy

Give it a try. Take a single sentence from your piece — a single idea — and write it on the “Ideas” side of the chart. Then, make a list on the “Details” side of every detail you can think of that goes with it. Think about the questions your audience would ask and try to answer them.

How many details should you have? That’s impossible to say. In general, having five to ten details for an idea will be plenty. The more important and unusual your idea, the more details you will need. Think about what your audience needs to know and make sure you include it.

IDEA	DETAILS
<i>A sentence that needs more support</i>	<i>What your audience needs to know</i>
<i>(Pick something important from your piece)</i>	<i>(Think of the questions people would ask)</i>